№ 4265.408

THE TRUSTEES OF THE
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OF THE CITY OF
BOSTON
1852 1878

Nov. 15, 1904
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"Equal School Rights."

To the Honorable Senators and Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in General Court assembled:

The undersigned, constituting a portion of the citizens of Boston, being deprived of the advantages of Common School Privileges, *solely* on account of complexion, respectfully submit their grievances to your honorable Board, asking your consideration to their claims, as citizens, to all the rights and privileges that all good citizens are entitled to, under the Constitution and Laws of this State.

We have frequently applied to the School Committee of our city, for the admission of our children to the several schools under their superintendence, and have always been refused, on account of wearing a different complexion from many of our neighbors; we therefore, many of us, are deprived of the opportunities for the early education of our children, unless we take advantage of the School established *exclusively* for colored persons. To that School we are opposed for the following reasons—

1. All the children of Colored Parents, regardless of distance, who reside within the City Proper, are compelled to attend that school or none; and in consequence of this, some children are known to pass half a dozen schools in the journey from their residences to the caste school.

2. We believe its existence detrimental to the interests of the rising generation. Prejudice and hatred are the direct results of exclusive institutions.

3. We believe we have a legal right to the free and untramelled admission of our children to the same schools in common with the children of our neighbors.

Now, a considerable number of the Colored People here, are not only residents, but *natives* of the State, and it is to them, any thing but an agreeable feeling, to witness the children of foreigners, if white, as soon as a vessel "makes fast" to the wharf, received into all the public schools of the city, while we are excluded.

During the pending of the case of Sarah C. Roberts *vs.* City of Boston, before the Supreme Court, where by her father, Benjamin F. Roberts, she sued for damages, on account of being expelled from the School nearest her dwelling because she was a colored child, we waited with great anxiety to witness an interpretation of the Laws of this Commonwealth as applying to this case, and were grieved to learn that the City Charter justified the course of the School Committee.

It is the unanimous wish of the intelligent and respectable portion of the Colored Citizens of Boston, that Exclusive Schools be abolished, and that they be placed in possession of equal opportunities with others, in regard to Common School Instruction for children.

We respectfully ask your Honorable Body to make a Law, with suitable penalties attached, prohibiting any person or persons, in public trust, from violating the rights of any citizen on account of Color.

BOSTON, FEBRUARY, 1851.

NAMES.	NUMBER IN FAMILY.	RESIDENCE.

1834
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